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No. 13.

A

DISCOURSE

ON

BEING BORN AGAIN.

BY MRS BARBAULD.

GEORGE G. DEANE
DORCHESTER, MASS.

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DISCOURSE.

"*Except a man be born again, he cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven.*"

A STRANGE paradox this, and so it seemed to the person to whom the declaration was addressed, and he answered to the literal sense, with more simplicity than acuteness, "Can a man enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born?" Yet the eastern manner is so full of bold metaphors, that though a European might naturally have been startled at the seeming uncouthness of the figure, a ruler in Israel ought to have readily understood the spiritual meaning shadowed out under the similitude. The beginning of a Christian's life in his conversion from sin to holiness is here designed under the figure of a birth, a new or a second birth; and it shall be the business of this discourse to unfold the beauty and justness of the metaphor.

That the whole man is not born at once, is a doctrine of philosophy no less than of religion; the infant has only entered upon an animal life; whatever lofty titles we may salute him with on his entrance upon the stage, he is not yet a moral agent, or even a rational creature. There is, therefore, some subsequent period in which he enters upon the spiritual, the divine life, and whether it be by the gradual unfolding of his powers, or by the more sudden and striking change of a conversion

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from sin to holiness, it is well expressed by the figure of a birth.

What is it to be born in the natural sense? To be born is to receive being, life, existence. It is to have objects presented to our eyes, melodies to our ears, flavors to our tastes, to have a thousand sensations crowded upon us, of which before we could not possibly have any idea, or form the most imperfect conception. It is to leave a dark prison, and emerge to life and joy and action. And how well does the change wrought in the heart of a Christian correspond with this criterion of a birth! What a new world of ideas and feelings are opened upon him! He had before no organs with which to discern spiritual things. He had heard of them, but he apprehended them not; there was no faculty in him by which he could take hold of them; but the moment he is born again the eyes of his mind are opened; he sees, feels, tastes, and relishes the word of God, the bread of life, the gracious influences of the Spirit. The invisible world is laid open to him, he sees the beauty of right action, feels the force of moral obligation. He tastes a sweetness in the ordinances of religion, in prayers and psalms and sacraments, which before were dry and without savor to him; which he had attended from day to day and from sabbath to sabbath, as mere matter of form and decency. Before he was born into the world of sense, now he holds communion with the world of spirits. And is not this a mighty and important change?

Again: To be born implies having a father, a descent, a parentage; the natural man is born the son, perhaps, of some mighty chief or distinguished statesman, or head of a noble house. But trifling, indeed, are all these distinctions in comparison of that which *he* receives who acquires a right to consider himself as the child of God, who in humble confidence may call by the tender and affection-

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ate appellation of Father, the Sovereign of the universe. A child, when born, has a name given him. And the Christian has a name, a new name, written in his forehead, registered in heaven, even in the Lamb's book of life. As soon as a child comes into the world its voice is heard. It sends forth a cry, a meaning cry, which seems to say, "Here am I feeble, helpless, naked; nourish me, protect me, cherish me in your bosom, bear with my weakness, lead me up to manhood." So also when a believer is born into the life of Christ, his voice is heard and he prayeth. With strong and earnest cries he supplicates the Father of his spirit for pardon and for blessings. Prayer is the natural, unstudied expression of those feelings which are then awakened within him. He casts himself before the throne of grace, and waits patiently there as an infant clings to the breast of his mother, and there he rests all his cares, all his concerns in a child-like humility and unreserved trust and cheerful confidence.

Again: A child is not born into the world without great and strong pains. And great are the pains which precede the new birth, sharp are the pangs of repentance, great the travail of the ministers and laborers in Christ, and deep those groanings which cannot be uttered, that must pass before the change be wrought, which in some distinguished instances has been wrought, from the depths of guilt and defilement, and mental bondage, to the glorious liberty of the sons of God. But when once a child is born, how great is the joy! The father taketh it in his arms and blesseth it; the mother forgetteth her suffering to smile upon it; the friends and relations and neighbors crowd around it, and welcome into existence the new creature. It is received into a family, into a brotherhood, linked into a close knot of amity with all who are partakers of the same blood. With mingled curiosity and

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affection they trace in its little lineaments lines of resemblance to its parents, and fondly prognosticate from thence the beauty and vigor of the future man. And is there not joy when a soul is born! joy of its ministers, joy of the church, joy even in heaven over a sinner that repenteth! With what kindly meltings of paternal love does the universal Father receive the returning prodigal, revive the spirits of the penitent Magdalen, and cherish the innocent children who come to him for a blessing! And what a family, what a brotherhood, does *he* become a member of who is partaker of this divine life! the wide extended family of God's virtuous and approved children; the brotherhood of all the holy and the happy in all worlds and in all ages; he is united to saints, and angels, and spirits of the just made perfect, who do not disdain the meanest member of this blessed community, if united with them in sincere desire to do the will of their common Father.

Again: What further joy is there if the child be born an heir, and entitled to inherit some portion of this vain and perishable earth! What ostentation, what importance, what carefulness in displaying the wealth, in setting forth and adorning the child! The very nurse is quite proud and glorious to take care of one born to such a distinguished and happy lot. The possessions of most are confined to a certain number of acres, but some favored mortals enjoy a portion of this globe which may even be distinguished in a map of the world, and extends over the circumference of a few inches there. How assiduous to give him his title, how careful to preserve his pedigree! What a lively interest is taken in his health, his dress, his sports, and every thing belonging to him, as if he were really of a distinct species from the common race of mortals! And what an estate, what a title, what

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a heritage is the Christian born to! He is born an heir of glory, he expects a heritage in the land of promise, thrones in heaven; heaven is his, and earth is his, and all things are his, for God is his; and nothing can deprive him of his glorious birthright, except he himself should alienate and renounce it.—But let it be observed, the heir does not inherit immediately. He waits for his possessions till he is able to enjoy and manage them, and in the meantime this inheritor of a splendid fortune is made subject to every one that is about him. First he cannot, and then he may not, stir a step without others; he is every thing in hope, nothing in possession; his cheeks are bathed in frequent tears, his will is crossed, his appetites checked, the purposes and projects of his little heart continually counteracted; he is scourged, buffeted and severely handled, according to his childish conceptions, by his parents, masters and tutors. Nay, he is kept under by those who afterwards will not presume so much as to approach his presence. And thus it must be with the heir of glory while he is in the nonage of this world; afflictions and crosses and disappointments are the schoolmasters to bring him to Christ. His high destination and lofty hopes do not hinder him from being lorded over and roughly treated by the children of this world, who are often wiser in their generation than the children of light. Jacob was the heir of the promises, yet he became the servant of Laban; and the seed of Abraham was long held in bondage by the Egyptians.

In the next place it may be remarked, that though the child is born, it may die. Life, *mere* life, is an inestimable gift, and there is an infinite difference between existence in the lowest state and non-existence; but life in its early stages is peculiarly frail and delicate; when the flame is first kindled, a breath will extinguish it. What care, therefore, is exercised to preserve the tender infant,

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to choose the most wholesome air and salutary food, to avoid infectious disorders, and cherish its limbs with grateful warmth, and promote by frequent exercise the expansion of its powers! What anxiety, if it appears to decline, instead of thriving in health and vigor! What expense or what trouble is spared to procure the most judicious advice, and find out the cause and apply the remedy? And shall we feel less care or less anxiety to preserve the life and well being of the soul? Is not equal care requisite in the beginnings of the spiritual life to prevent the smoking flax from being quenched, and the languishing virtue from becoming extinct? Can our virtues gain strength without exercise, or spiritual beings thrive without spiritual food? Is the young Christian able to contend with the subtle cavils of sophistry, or to resist the contagion of evil example? Can he breathe freely in the tainted atmosphere of impure communication; and will his virtues have the same genuine and healthy complexion in the world, as when protected and cherished in the shade of domestic retirement?

Examine yourselves, therefore, all you who are concerned for the well being of the immortal part within you, both whether you have undergone this important change, and whether you are improving it to the perfection of the divine life. As to the first part of the question, much needless anxiety has formerly been incurred by weak and well meaning Christians for want of reflecting on this simple truth, that he whom we see *living* must some time or other certainly have been *born*. When we see a man walking, conversing, acting, exercising all the functions of animal life, we should think it very superfluous to inquire whether he had been born or no. Thus no other criterion is necessary to ascertain the reality of the new birth but the effects of it. When we see a man in whom holy affections and good principles bring forth the fruits of virtuous

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actions, we may be well assured that he is born in the gospel sense, though he may remember it as little as he does his natural birth. The operations of grace are gradual as well as those of nature; the widest flame is kindled at first by the smallest spark, and whatever is produced must be brought to perfection by slow and insensible degrees. Therefore, first, be not satisfied with merely being born. It is not enough that the child is born, it must grow too. Do you grow in grace and graces? In a healthy body the limbs enlarge and shoot out. A vigorous principle of life draws nourishment from every thing it takes; it cannot be stationary; if it does not thrive and increase, it must languish and die. It is not natural to rest in any stage, and especially in the earliest and weakest. We love children rather for the promise than the fruit. Lovely and interesting as they are, if they were to remain children we should be grievously disappointed. If, after having nursed them up to the full age of manhood, they were to retain the weakness and imbecility of an infant, instead of exciting tenderness they would raise disgust. And though the meanest renewed soul is precious in the sight of God, yet we must run and strive, and add to our faith virtue, and to virtue holiness and all the fair fruits of the spirit. Would you know, therefore, whether you are in this healthy and growing state, inquire with yourselves.

Is your taste pure and unvitiated, your appetite for spiritual things strong and vigorous, or can you not relish your sabbaths and your sermons except you meet with wit and eloquence and novelty to tickle the nicer ear? Can you not love your duty unless it sorts with your inclination? Are you various and capricious in your taste for divine things, sometimes longing and sometimes loathing? Can you not hold communion with a good Christian of plain, unadorned sense and homespun manners? Then is the com-

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plexion of your inward man too delicate and weakly. Ye are not only babes in Christ, but sickly babes too.

Is your conscience sensible and tender? It is a bad sign when in the natural man the feeling is numbed and torpid. Conscience is the moral sense or *feeling* every where diffused, and tremblingly alive to every impression. Does it continue quick and lively, or is it worn away by the irritation of frequent injuries? Is any part about you palsied and callous? Then, indeed, is your soul's health in an alarming state, and you have great reason to apply to the Physician of souls for a cure.

Do you relish the word of God? I ask not do you *read*, though that were perhaps a question to be asked, but do you *relish* it? Are you revived by its promises, awed by its threats, quickened by its examples? Those who have acquired a taste for the literature of the schools, do as it were suck the sweetness from the poet's spring, and imbibe into their souls the spirit of the classic page. Do you in like manner dwell upon the conversations and the life of your Saviour? Do you cling to them like a bee to the bud, and draw out their genuine flavor and sweetness? Taste of that honey, and, like Jonathan, your eyes shall be enlightened.

Is your sense of invisible things quick and piercing? Where others see trees and suns and harvests, do you see God and Christ and glory? Where others see crosses and afflictions, set as it were in array against them, do you see graces springing and blessings dropping down upon you? Where others see the vain and miserable politics of this world, the fretting, bustling and contention of the children of it, do you see an overruling Providence, directing and ordering all things according to its own wise and beneficent purposes? Do you see God in every thing? Is he always intimately present to you in every scene and in every transaction, and nearer to

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your heart than any outward connexion? Then is the vital principle strong and vigorous within you.

Lastly, do you live by prayer? Are your prayers forced from you by the strong impulse of nature, when danger or unforeseen distress overtakes you, like that of Peter; "Lord help us, or we perish." Are they formal and stated only, or do you pray without ceasing,—standing, walking, conversing, buying and selling? In the song and in the dance do you lift up your hearts to God? For though the buyers and sellers might not be introduced into the temple, yet the business of the temple may and must be carried on in the commerce of the world.

And if you have the happiness to find after fair examination that you are yourselves thus advanced, make it your business to educate and bring up others to the same state of maturity. Be nursing fathers and nursing mothers to the church of Christ. When you meet with those who are inferior to yourselves in gifts and attainments, do not separate yourselves from them with a pharisaical fastidiousness, but treat them with that tenderness and indulgence, which you would shew to a promising infant. Remove out of their path every stumbling block, remembering who it is that hath said, "Offend not one of these little ones." Let your superiority be shewn in bearing with their weakness, in instructing their ignorance, in rectifying their mistakes, and passing over with a manly indifference the little spirit of captiousness and humor which proceeds from the petulance of their infirm age. Remember, it is not a trifling thing to be born, and despise not the day of small things. Before birth there is nothing; nothing on which to ground a hope, or hardly a wish; but as soon as born, there are the seeds, the rudiments of a human being; they want expanding, it is true, but they are there; they require only kindly warmth and nourishment to spread into the perfect man

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Thus he in whom, by the divine grace, good principles and sincere intentions of doing well are formed, has the root of the matter in him, and needs nothing but the gradual discipline of years and events to bring out and confirm his virtues.

Finally, let us all lend our utmost endeavors to procure an interest in that life to which the being born again is to introduce us. There is a beautiful progression in the powers of man. In the womb he lives a vegetative life, after the natural birth an animal life, after the new birth a spiritual life. Unlike to the grass of the field, which when it withers or is cut down springs up again, it is true, but neither stronger nor fresher, nor less corruptible than before; for, to exist today, and tomorrow to be cast into the oven, completes from generation to generation the short and simple annals of the vegetable race;—unlike to these, he receives with every change a new accession of faculties and enjoyments, and, if it is not his own fault, rises in value after every decay. You, then, who are old, according to the number of years, and have almost spent one life, have you taken care to provide yourselves with another? While the principle of decay is busy within you, and every year takes something from your strength and agility and vigor, and leaves you but the remnant of yourselves, do you feel another nature within you springing and growing, and pushing towards perfection? Or have you nothing which belongs to age but its infirmities? Are you grey with years and green in goodness, withering away in your outward, and scarcely blossoming in your inward man? Or, at best, are your late-born virtues like the unseasonable shoots of autumn, when the fading year has not vigor enough to bring them to perfection? Are you almost pushed out of one class of being, and is scarcely the embryo formed in you of a new being belonging to another class? How, then,

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indeed, can you enter into the kingdom of heaven? The bars against your entrance are those of the eternal differences of species, and the immutable nature of things; for you will observe it is not said, He that is not born again *shall* not enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he *cannot* enter. That which is produced a vegetable cannot enter into the mineral kingdom, nor that which is formed a mineral into the animal kingdom: thus, also, "that which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the spirit is spirit," and each class and mode of being must be kept distinct, nor is it possible that the one should enter into the precincts of the other. And this is the case with most of the denunciations in the word of God. They are not arbitrary exclusions from happiness, and punishments contrived and invented (if I may so speak) for the purpose of inflicting misery upon the delinquent; but salutary warnings and kind information respecting the natural and necessary consequences of our actions and dispositions. Nor is the kingdom of heaven separated from the kingdoms of this world, as they are from one another, by barriers of rock and wide extended seas, and jealous gates and fortresses, nor need we go out into the wilderness to find it. It is in the midst of us. It exists silently, to most invisibly, in the very heart and bustle of the world, a kingdom within a kingdom. Its boundaries have nothing in common with those of space or time. They relate to dispositions only. Where these are heavenly, there is the kingdom of heaven; where these are sensual, there is the kingdom of sense. Into the kingdom of sense, indeed, we have all been born, and while we are in this world we ought to belong to it; but the things of sense are transitory; let us therefore, secure an interest in that spiritual kingdom which never passeth away.

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SERMON.

ISAIAH v, 11.

Woe unto them that rise up early in the morning, that they may follow strong drink; that continue until night, till wine inflame them.

THERE is no sin on which God can look with any degree of approbation; *for the* WRATH *of God is revealed from heaven against* ALL *ungodliness and unrighteousness of men.* The use of ardent spirits has undoubtedly occasioned much evil, even where it is not used to that excess mentioned in the text. Much time and money are spent by persons, who are not considered intemperate, that might be put to a use which would be more for the glory of God and the good of men. Yet there are instances that require the use of spiritous liquor; and in such cases it may be used with as much propriety as our daily food.

The character, personated in the text, is one that has given loose to his appetite, and is in every sense of the word a drunkard. To this excessive use of ardent spirits we shall confine our attention. Perhaps there is no evil prevailing among mankind that has done more damage to the human family, than the sin of intemperance; War has brought sorrow and poverty; Envy has occasioned torture and death; and Adultery has filled the hearts of many with anguish and heart rending grief; but while these are slaying their tens, drunkenness is burying its thousands in ruin.

When God created man he blessed him, and said *have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the fowls of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.* But notwithstanding man has *superior* privileges and faculties, the very beasts may smile at the folly of many, for no brute has degraded himself to the common level of the drunkard. When this evil began to prevail cannot be precisely determined, but probably before the flood. The apostle informs us *that they continued eating and drinking until the flood came*, but if they were not intemperate before, they were soon after the flood. Noah soon planted a vineyard, *he drank of the wine and was drunken.* Gen. ix, 21. In order that the sin of intemperance may ap-

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pear in its true light, we shall mention some of the *evils* which it occasions.

1st. It destroys the subject. The condition of man in his fallen state, requires the full exercise of his reason and judgment, that he may obtain the necessaries and conveniences of life; but intemperance destroys these faculties and renders many men of the most brilliant talents, even vagabonds upon earth.—The *ground* is now cursed on account of man's transgression; so that much labor and fatigue are necessary in order to obtain our daily bread. All the strength that is afforded us by nature is needed to subdue the earth, that it may bring forth its annual increase; but drunkenness breaks the firmest constitution, and brings the most robust youth a tottering victim to the grave. Since the FALL, man has become exceedingly prone to the practice of evil, and needs to be doubly fortified against the corruptions of his nature, and the assaults of satan; but drunkenness is voluntary madness, and emboldens men to do those things, at the very thought of which, they would tremble, in their sober hours.—The *character* of man, in his fallen and depraved state, is exceedingly polluted and hateful in the sight of his Maker; but drunkenness adds a stain which nothing but the blood of Christ hath power to remove. Our minds have become exceedingly stupid and prone to neglect the great concerns of the soul; that which has a tendency to increase this stupidity, is a most dreadful evil; drunkenness has an immediate tendency to bind the soul in chains of darkness, which nothing but sovereign grace can break. We are naturally the children of wrath, and tending downward to the regions of despair; but drunkenness ends the climax and seals the man an heir of hell—for no drunkard shall inherit the kingdom of God!

Can that be a small evil which ruins our intellectual powers?—destroys our health?—emboldens us to do the most flagrant crimes?—deprives us of the comforts of life?—renders us vagabonds on earth?—confirms us in the way to destruction?—brings us to an untimely grave?—and finally lands us in irretrievable woe?—Pause and reflect!

Neither are the evils of intemperance confined to a few solitary individuals: it is a pestilence that walketh in darkness, and destruction that wasteth at noon-

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day. This wide wasting pestilence has spread its infernal dominion nearly over the whole earth, so that in all quarters of the world victims are falling before it. Its enchantments are subtle. It leads the youth from one step to another, till he is lost to all feeling and glories in his shame. Many of the middle aged, and even some of the aged do not escape its direful influence. We see them at first taking as large draughts of the baneful poison as they can bear without disguise, and arguing, that unless their spirits are some raised, or (as they term it,) unless they can *feel* what they drink, it does them no good. This wears upon them, so that by and by the same quantity overcomes them, and they are occasionally disguised. Now their appetite becomes much keener than before; they feel their spirits depressed, and resort for relief to the same fountain that has already made them miserable; and soon become drunkards in good earnest. The first thing *in the morning* must be *strong drink*, they *continue until night, till wine inflame them.* An evil is to be greatly dreaded which is so subtle and so mighty. Few, very few have ever escaped from its snares. Tremble, oh drunkard! and flee from your foe; or his bands will soon be eternal, and your soul, *eternally* lost.

2d. It distresses, and sometimes destroys the *families*, and wastes the *property* of the man who follows strong drink.

View the once thrifty farmer, who has now given himself to the pleasures of the cup; and you will find him deeply involved in debt; his fences thrown down; his cattle roaming at large; his vegetables much damaged, if not wholly destroyed, and every thing about him wears the aspect of ruin and decay. When you behold this change you measurably learn what it meaneth, *Woe unto them that rise up early in the morning that they may follow strong drink.* Visit the school where the children of good citizens enjoy the benefits of improvement, and you see that many scholars who live within the limits of the district are absent; on learning that they have not attended since the commencement of the school, you may be led to inquire into the cause of their abscence, and you will generally find, that while the cruel father, destitute of natural affections, is spending his time and money

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at the grogshop, his children must be engaged in drudgery at home, to procure a morsel to relieve their pinching hunger ; or for want of decent apparel must waste their time in the mournful cottage, while the children of temperate and industrious parents are preparing for usefulness, virtue and happiness. Thus the unfeeling wretch trains up his offspring for misery and woe, and hands down the calamity from generation to generation. But you may be called again to visit the beforementioned family, and learn from the effect, the evils of intemperance in a more lively colour than I can possibly paint. You will behold the once cheerful and tender mother, whose countenance bespoke the residence of love, health, and contentment ; but she is now the picture of grief and every line in her face betrays the anguish of her heart. A numerous family clinging about her, with heartrending cries for the supplies of nature ; but having neither food nor raiment, overcome with grief, she sinks beneath its weight—tears trickling down her cheeks—she weeps aloud—she exclaims Oh ! my husband—my children —my children. Presently arrives from carousing, the once loving, provident and tender husband ; but now the degraded simpleton, or staggering tyrant, breathing threatening and slaughter ; he adds pain to hunger and nakedness. While his children are yet smarting by reason of some unguarded blow ; they, with the weeping brokenhearted, and perhaps now bruised mother, pleading for mercy, are excluded from his shelter, and exposed to the piercing wind, or some violent storm, and they must seek protection from some friendly hand or perish with the cold. If you witness this horrid scene, unless you are past all feeling, you will cry out with the prophet, *Woe to them that rise up early in the morning, that they may follow strong drink.* Finally, follow the poor intemperate man to the regions of despair. Behold him raving with horror ! Weeping, wailing and gnashing his teeth ! Consigned to the regions of woe—bound with eternal chains of darkness ! How would he (but in vain) cry for a drop of water to cool his parched tongue. With what melting strains, would he tell you the awful consequence of drunkenness. With what fervour would he intreat you to warn his friends

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to flee from intemperance, that they come not to this place of torment.

II. We shall notice the light in which God views the *character* of a drunkard. If we turn to the scriptures, we find that the murderer shall be put to death, *for whoso sheddeth man's blood by man shall his blood be shed.* Also for the most abominable cases of adultery, God has cursed the offenders and sentenced them to immediate death by public execution. Likewise he sentences those who are guilty of undue connection with beasts, to be put to death; and with these he ranks the drunkard. Moses commands in Deuteronomy, that when one is brought before the elders of the city and proved to be a glutton and a drunkard, that *all the men of the city shall stone him with stones till he die.* Since God ranks the drunkard with the unnatural whoremonger and murderer; how can we but follow the divine example. Why should we try to palliate their guilt with smooth words, and deny the rank God has assigned them? This would be exceedingly dangerous, for this sin is so deceitful that it no sooner obtains a favorable name, than its guilt is lost in the sight of its favorite followers, and they are made sevenfold more the children of hell than before. Hence the faithful apostle cries out, *be not deceived,* NO *drunkard shall inherit the kingdom of God.*

Shall we invite your attention more particularly to the scriptures, and there learn how God looks upon the *character* of drunkards, from his threatenings against them. *Woe to them that rise up early in the morning, that they may follow strong drink; that continue until night, till wine inflame them: and it come to pass, when he heareth the words of this curse, that he bless himself in his heart saying; I shall have peace though I walk in the imagination of my heart to add drunkenness to thirst, the Lord will not spare him; but then the anger of the Lord shall smoke against that man and all the curses that are written in this book shall lie upon him, and the Lord shall blot out his name from under heaven; and the Lord shall separate him unto evil, out of all the tribes of Israel; for the drunkard and the glutton shall come to poverty, and drowsiness shall clothe a man with rags. The drunkards of Ephraim shall be trodden under feet, while they be drunken; as drunkards they shall be devoured as the stub-*

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ble fully dry. These threatenings are not merely the dogmas of the credulous; but they are the declarations of God, who knoweth how to estimate evil, and render to each according to his work. Let it sink deep in your hearts; these threatenings shall be accomplished, for *the Lord God hath spoken it.* Hence we may see that the character of a drunkard in the sight of God is exceedingly obnoxous. We may learn further his feelings towards them, by noticing such as have been made public examples of divine vengeance. Nabal (*whose possessions were in Carmel*) was exceedingly great, but he added iniquity to iniquity and closed his career with drunkenness; *the Lord smote Nabal* that he died. Notwithstanding God suffers long with sinners, he will not let them go unpunished. When he makes one a public example, it should be considered an illustration of his feelings towards all who are guilty of similar crimes, and what will, either sooner or later, be the lot of all that continue in similar sins, for God's justice is inflexible. Our Saviour further observes, that *God shall come in a time when he looketh not for him, and cut him off, and appoint him his portion with hypocrites and unbelievers.* Hence we learn that a drunkard in the eye of Jehovah is an object of his wrath, and justly exposed to death, both temporal and spiritual.

The apostle views drunkards in no better light when he exhorts his Corinthian brethren, with such, [illegible] not to eat. How dreadful is the state of those that eagerly follow strong drink! for they are excluded from the society of the first born, and made heirs of perdition. The character and conduct of drunkards show, that they are of their father the devil. Satan ruined himself; he had no one, but himself, on whom he could throw the blame. He afterwards set the example of sin before others, and used all his influence to make them as miserable as himself. The man of intemperance first ruins himself, and afterwards sets bad examples before others, and so far as his influence extends he follows the footsteps of his father. After satan gets dominion over others so as to make them his children, instead of cherishing them with the affection of a father, he diligently seeks to make them as miserable as himself. So after the man has once

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become a *sot*, instead of treating his companion and children, with the affections of a husband, and the tenderness of a father, he treats them with wanton barbarity, and like satan he endeavours to make them as miserable as himself.

Our text appears to be looking forward to future prospects. These may be better understood by considering the intemperate in connexion with their common father. Satan when he first sinned *was cast out and reserved, in everlasting chains, under darkness, unto the judgment of the great day.* So the drunkard is an outcast among men, and the chains which bind him are so strong, that they may well be called everlasting, and that he is under darkness, will not admit a doubt, for he is continually *heaping up wrath against the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgments of God.* But if we look at his prospects beyond this life, they are still more dark. John the Revelator speaking of what will be the final portion of satan, says, *the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone where the beast and the false prophets are, and shall be tormented day and night forever and ever.* Christ says in the 25th of Matthew, that he will say *to those on the left hand, depart ye cursed into everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels.* Hence the woe of which the prophet speaks is depression and misery in the present life, and in eternity a residence with devils and damned spirits, *where the worm dieth not and the fire is not quenched.*

It is true that *serious, candid* persons may be overtaken by this sin; but they will be really grieved, and humbled under a sense of their iniquity, and be doubly fortified against the temptation for time to come. Such persons are not the ones on whom the woe is pronounced. But the dreadful state, of those who do give themselves up to follow strong drink as their chief end, and with eager attention, can never be described. Tremble oh man! lest this case be yours.

Having endeavoured to set forth some of the evils of intemperance, we close with a short address. And first to the venerable Society recently formed for the Suppression of Intemperance.

We trust that you have taken under consideration the evils which result from intempe- nce and that compas-

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sion on sufferers, has moved you to unite your influence for its suppression. You unitedly agree to *combat* this monster of the infernal regions, and in as many instances as is possible to rescue the miserable prey from his jaws. You will remember that your enemy can boast of his thousands slain, and will not yield to small opposition. A few feeble efforts will only enrage him to bolder depredations. You must therefore be armed with fortitude to persevere ; for such is the present state of man that no important object can be obtained without a fixed resolution to continue firm and unmovable. Your object is noble. To suppress vice and misery and to establish virtue, peace and happiness, drew the attention of Christ ; look to him for direction and follow his illustrious example. But notwithstanding much good may result from your efforts, you are not to expect applause, or gratitude, even from the persons whom you endeavour to reclaim till God change their hearts. And should they make you the subject of derision, or load you with curses, think it not strange, for this was their conduct, toward the saviour of man.

Your example will probably conduce as much to the suppression of intemperance, as your efforts, if you keep your covenant engagements ; for virtue has a dignity which strikes a damp on the licentious : They will see that judicious men look upon this practice with contempt ; and thereby learn how their characters are estimated by all whose judgment is worth regarding. But if instances of intemperance prevail among *you*, it will *stamp your character with infamy*, and destroy your influence ; your enemies will triumph in your shame, and a wound will be opened, that tears can never heal, for you, that teach that men should live soberly, must live soberly yourselves. Give no occasion to any one to speak evil of the cause. Let your *whole* deportment evince the sincerity of your hearts. Deal with tenderness and affection ; expostulate with meekness ; take them alone in their sober hours ; tell them of their danger and their disgrace ; and endeavour with all long suffering and forbearance, to convince them and reclaim them with love. This may be done to the best advantage when the perso[illegible] inclines that way ; for the con-

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mitted murder, as they committed all the other crimes for which God condemns them. But the degree of their guilt depended on the knowledge they could have that it was wrong. To return then from our digression, I repeat: to sell alcohol as a drink, is now murder in the sight of God, without any mitigation: and that, for two reasons; because alcohol kills, and because they may know that to be its natural effect. Their ignorance, if they are ignorant, is voluntary. They love the darkness more than the light, and they will not come to the light lest their deeds be reproved. Nor would I make so tremendous a charge against the traffickers without proof. You will not require me to give an extended proof, that alcohol is a poison and an enemy of human life. I speak of that substance which Segalas, an eminent French physiologist introduced into the vein of a dog, and he instantly dropped down dead. I speak of that substance, of which, if the speaker should drink that tumbler full, he would probably in ten minutes gasp in the agonies of death. You know the substance: it is poison—sheer, unnutritive, fiery poison, This is the first fact on which this awful charge is founded. The second is—that the distiller, the wholesale merchant, the grocer, the tavern-keeper, *may* know its nature and effect. If that is true; oh my fellow citizens tremble. For he cometh he cometh to the judgment. And when inquisition is made for blood; if you cannot fly behind this last refuge of involuntary ignorance, your case is hopeless. Let us, then, see how the matter stands. Every drinker and vender of alcohol in this city may know that it kills: from two sources.

1. From physicians who declare that this is its natural and necessary effect, as truly as it is of fire to consume; that it is no more adapted to do man good than henbane is. Now, suppose the man who dropped down and died just after leaving a grocery; had been last at yours. A coroner's jury pronounce it death caused by intoxication. You are arraigned for murder; one of those physicians who has already pronounced alcohol a poison, is subpœnaed as a witness. He is ordered to examine the corpse. He comes into court and says—the death was manifestly caused by the alcohol he had just drank. The court then ask; is alcohol a poison? "It has always been so ranked by medical chemists. I have analyzed it, and I pronounce it a poison. Other witnesses are called in to shew that you administered that poison." I ask then, on what principle will an honest jury hesitate and refuse to pronounce you guilty; when the court shall have instructed them that you might have known the nature of the article, and its natural effects from the immense number and variety of the publications, sermons and addresses which repeat the testimony of the physician. From this city alone millions are issued every year. This is precisely one of that

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class of cases in which the testimony of the physician turns the scale in the decisions of the jury, even where life and death are at issue. But these very men now tell you, you are dealing out poison. Will God then hold you guiltless, even if man approve your course? But there is still another source of knowledge, which leaves you yet more inexcusable: it is your own observation, confirmed by that of men of every class. Not, as in the former case, the tracing internally its fiery track over one tissue of the body after another, and from one channel of life to another; but its visible, external effects; effects so manifest, that any child eight years old can trace them to their cause; effects to which you can get testimony until no house could hold the statements which might be written. Ask your little child, as he sees your neighbor, a stout, strong man, reeling out of your store, what ails that man? "Why, father, he is drunk; you gave him something from that decanter, and that makes him stagger so." Never were cause and *effect* more manifestly connected. Its first visible influence is on the muscles. And if the man were a giant, this serpent would coil around him, and wrap his iron sinews in its fiery embrace until from very infantile weakness, his head is too heavy for the muscles of the neck, the hands are too weighty for the muscles of the arm, the body too heavy for the knees; they bend, and reel and stagger, until he presses just as closely to the earth, as a log. This is but the beginning of the work of death. I hope I shall not exaggerate in any thing. In a case where the truth is so awful, it would be both foolish and sinful to state any thing but facts to produce the deepest impression. The next thing you cannot fail to observe is, that the brain is strongly and injuriously affected. The brain is the most delicate and mysterious part of the human body: its state may generally be known by the state of the mind. Look then at the attack you have made on this vital organ. If your customer had been Demosthenes, whose eloquence, one hour before, had made a continent tremble; look at him as your poison begins to seize the brain. See his drivelling; mark his eye—Its lightning flash is gone. Hear his speech; blasphemous, obscene, idiotic! Oh where is his mind? Ask not—the poison of Arabia is maddening his brain. But I cannot now follow the history of those signals which nature tortured, scorched and maddened in every vital organ, successively holds out. The eye, the color of the face, its muscles, the nose, the trembling hand plead eloquently that you would stop your victorious attack on every citadel of life. The loss of appetite, indigestion soon proclaims that another vital organ, the liver is yielding to the universal conqueror whom you have sent to wage this unrelenting warfare. Our city and New York taught us some impressive lessons on this subject, during the prevalence of

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the cholera. One in sixty of our alcohol drinking population died; while only one in twenty-five hundred of the members of our temperance societies died by it In New York, it is said, that of the six hundred taken to Park Hospital, scarcely any died who had drank no ardent spirit for two years. It was remarked by an intelligent observer, that if it had not been for the sale and use of ardent spirit, there would not been cholera enough to suspend business for a single day. Did you ever see a case of Delirium Tremens?—Did you not think alcohol was a poison? Did you hear the scream, the maniac scream—did you see the poor wretch trying to drive away the devils with which his distracted fancy was filling the air—did you see him try to wipe off the filthy snakes which he saw crawling all over his body? Did you not think alcohol was a poison? In the year 1833, Mr. Hogan tells us, that in our jail alone, from the rum sold in this city, there were at least one hundred cases of delirium tremens. The only death there in the year, was that of a woman by this horrid disease. It has been observed by our judges, police magistrates and jailers, that scarcely a case of murder occurs in this country, but under the influence of alcohol. You probably read the account of that father, who after spending the evening in a scene of grovelling dissipation and frantic riot, was transformed into an infuriated demon; went home found his wife and children in bed; took the axe and knocked them all in the head, like so many brutes, then cut his own throat, and madly hurried to tell his judge, that for a paltry pittance, his neighbor gave him the bowl of madness; it turned his brain, and he rushed to murder, to death, to hell. Do I exaggerate? God forbid. Only go to the files of newspapers in our city for ten years, and if you cannot learn that alcohol is a poison; then you must either plead idiocy, or stand convicted of voluntary ignorance.—Where would you find alcohol if he were a real person? If there is a scene of rioting, profaneness, debauchery, is there a place of sinful amusement, a place where the mind is exhibited in its utmost depravity, in which its influence is not predominant? Is there a hovel of wretchedness and want, in which you may not point to the badges of misery; and say, these are the natural fruits of this tree? It poisons the mind as well as the body. The horrid murders recently committed on the Baltimore railroad can be traced entirely to the influence of the whiskey drank by the laborers in immense quantities. After the laborers there became accustomed to the frequent use of it from the hands of the contractors, they became indolent, and at pay day were cut down in their wages. They vowed revenge, and such a scene of turbulence and blood as was enacted on the Baltimore and Washington railroad, has been seldom seen in this country. The terrified inhabitants were seen flying from their houses in utter dismay.

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And it seems as if God permitted this occurrence to punish those contractors, and lift the light so high and glaring on this point, that none could any longer sin ignorantly. Alcohol is poison. No fact in human science is established by evidence of a more certain kind, and of greater variety, than this—that alcohol is a poison. Its general properties and its hidden effects on the body are attested by hundreds of scientific men. Its external, obvious effects are attested by the senses of millions. These effects are not rare and occasional, but regular and necessary. The drunkard's woes and premature death are entirely unnatural, and the direct and legitimate result of drinking a poison. Where is then the ground of an apology to any one in this country who has eyes or ears—that he was ignorant of the nature and effects of ardent spirit? We see none. Let us then repeat the doctrine of our discourse.

To use alcohol as an ordinary drink, is suicide. To make, give, or sell it to be so used, is murder, by heaven's law, even if that law be interpreted by the principles adopted in human legislation.

But the crime of the spirit vender has yet another aggravation. It not only is murder, but is in all its bearings, the most cruel form of murder ever yet devised by satanic cunning, and malice. It is different from any form of murder which highwaymen or pirates ever adopt. Contrast a death by alcohol with one caused by a pistol-shot.

Mark—

1. *The protracted bodily suffering.* You boast that your customers live a great while. Yes, but how do they live? Hours, months, years of protracted disease first preying on one delicate fibre, and then on another. Who hath woes? The drinker of your slow poison.

A pistol-shot drives through the heart, and one or two convulsive struggles finish the sufferings of earth.

2. *There are protracted shame, fear, convictions and struggles.* You say, "my customers are free agents. I do not force them to drink." Yes, they are free, and that makes your species of murder so cruel. Give it to a swine and he is not called to render account for the sin of drunkenness, or any crimes resulting from it. But you give it to a man; a free accountable being. His relations to God and to society are various and complicated. He is a subject of God's moral government, an object of redeeming mercy's tenderest regard. He is a son, brother, citizen, friend, father. Every glass you hand out, vibrates along the most delicate chord, jars in harsh discord amid some of the sweetest music of life, disturbs its most important harmonies, and runs in its influence farther in extent and duration, than you have yet conceived. If a robber had pierced a man through with a sword, he might be for weeks writhing in bodily pain; but

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